

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated September 26, 2003. In view of the foregoing amendments and following representations, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Initially, in response to the objection to the abstract, a substitute abstract is submitted herewith. Also, a new title of the invention, which is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed, is presented. Note that the Examiner's helpful suggestion has been adopted.

To further facilitate the Examiner's reconsideration of the application, original claims 13-14 have been canceled and replaced with new claims 15-22. Each of the new claims has been carefully drafted to ensure compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. In particular, the language considered by the Examiner to be unclear has been avoided in the new claims. Thus, it is submitted that the rejection of claims 13-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is clearly overcome in view of the presentation of the new claims.

Next, on pages 3-4 of the Office Action, the original claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admission of prior art (APA) on pages 1-3 of the present application. It is submitted that the present invention, as embodied by the new claims, is now clearly allowable over the prior art component mounted apparatus (APA).

On pages 3-4 of the present specification, the disadvantages of the APA apparatus are described. The present invention operates in accordance with the claimed method to avoid the problems, such as apparatus errors, human errors, and wasted time. The wasted time is a time during which a component mounting operation is stopped (see Fig. 4), i.e. during the board transfer operations.

The present invention is directed to a method of mounting components in which the normally wasteful time T_s is utilized to perform a nozzle identifying operation. Thus, this

period is effectively utilized to determine whether or not a suction nozzle has been loaded in the component mounting head.


Since the APA apparatus does not perform a nozzle identifying operation during a period in which the component mounting operation is stopped, the APA apparatus clearly does not disclose or suggest the method set forth in independent claims 15 and 19.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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January 26, 2004